GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:4202
ANSWERED ON:11.08.2017
Blindness
Singh Shri Sunil Kumar

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has evolved a new definition of blindness;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the steps taken by the Government for reduction in the prevalence of blindness and also to achieve the elimination of avoidable blindness?

Answer

ANSWER
THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND
FAMILY WELFARE
(SMT. ANUPRIYA PATEL)
(a) & (b): The National Programme for Control of Blindness (NPCB) has been re-designated recently as National Programme for Control of Blindness and Visual Impairment (NPCB&VI). Further, the definition of blindness under NPCB&VI in the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare has also been modified in line with the definition of World Health Organization (WHO), i.e., 'presenting distance visual acuity less than 3/60 (20/400) in the better eye or limitation field of vision to be less than 10 degree from centre of fixation'.

(c): The following steps have been taken under NPCB&VI for reduction in the prevalence of blindness and also to achieve the elimination of avoidable blindness in the country:
â€¢ Reduction in the backlog of blind persons by active screening of population above 50 years, organizing eye screening camps and transporting operable cases of cataract and other eye diseases to fixed eye-care facilities for appropriate operation/treatment;
â€¢ Performance of cataract operations through Government and Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) Eye Hospitals;
â€¢ Screening of children for identification and treatment of refractive errors and distribution of free spectacles to those suffering from refractive errors under School Eye Screening Programme;
Contdâ€¦â€¦..

-2-
â€¢ Apart from Cataract, focus on treatment/management of other eye diseases like glaucoma, diabetic retinopathy, corneal blindness, vitreo-retinal diseases, diseases causing childhood blindness etc. is being actively taken up under programme;
â€¢ Collection of donated eyes for corneal transplantation and strengthening of eye banking services;
â€¢ Strengthening/developing of eye-care infrastructure at various levels to improve quantity and quality of eye-care services;
â€¢ Support for setting up of Regional Institutes of Ophthalmology (Centres of Excellence) for tertiary eye care services;
â€¢ In-service training of Eye Surgeons and paramedics for refreshing skills and use of modern technology;
â€¢ Promoting preventive Eye care and creating awareness through Information Education and Communication (IEC) activities.

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